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UPI-138

(SPY)

MOSCOW--RUSSIA MADE A RARE PUBLIC ADMISSION TODAY THAT COL. RUDOLPH ABEL SERVED AS A SOVIET MASTERSPY AND WAS DECORATED AFTER BEING EXCHANGED IN 1962 FOR U2 PILOT FRANCIS G. POWERS.

A MOSCOW TELEVISION PROGRAM TOLD ABEL'S STORY FOR THE FIRST TIME TO THE RUSSIANS AND DISCLOSED HE SERVED WITH THE SECURITY FORCES SINCE 1927. ABEL WAS IMPRISONED BY A NEW YORK COURT FOR 30 YEARS IN 1957.

JOURNALIST SERGEI SMIRNOV INDICATED ABEL--WHICH IS AN ASSUMED NAME-- WAS NOW LIVING IN MOSCOW AND PROBABLY WAS WATCHING THE TELEVISION PROGRAM.

AN UNIDENTIFIED GENERAL RECOUNTED ABEL'S HISTORY, WHICH HE SAID INCLUDED SENDING INTELLIGENCE TO THE SOVIET UNION OF NAZI GERMANY'S PLAN TO ATTACK IN 1941.

THE OFFICER DESCRIBED HOW ABEL FINALLY WAS ARRESTED DURING ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT AND DEFENDED IN COURT BY AMERICAN LAWYER JAMES DONOVAN AGAINST A "POSSIBLE DEATH SENTENCE."

BUT AT NO TIME DID THE GENERAL DISCLOSE THIS HAPPENED IN AMERICA. IT WAS DONOVAN WHO LATER WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN NEGOTIATING THE EXCHANGE BETWEEN ABEL AND POWERS.

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UPI-151

ADD SPY, MOSCOW (UPI-138)

THE GENERAL SAID THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY AND GOVERNMENT LATER DECORATED ABEL FOR CARRYING OUT HIS ASSIGNMENTS.

HE SAID ABEL'S ARREST IN NEW YORK WAS TRIGGERED BY "A DESPICABLE TREASON." HE DID NOT ELABORATE.

HE SAID "AGENTS OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY" RUSHED INTO HIS QUARTERS AND GAVE HIM THE CHOICE OF JOINING "FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE" OR GOING ON TRIAL AND FACING "A VERY POSSIBLE DEATH SENTENCE."

"HE TURNED DOWN WITH CONTEMPT THIS DESPICABLE OFFER AND BEHAVED LIKE A VALIANT FIGHTER," THE GENERAL SAID ON A PROGRAM DEVOTED TO THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF NAZI GERMANY'S DEFEAT.

"HE HELD FIRMLY, AND DID NOT GIVE WAY TO ANY LURING TALK. DURING THE INVESTIGATION, THEY USED DIFFERENT MEANS OF PERSUASION TO DRAG A CONFESSION FROM HIM ON HIS INTELLIGENCE WORK.

"BUT ALL THE ATTEMPTS TURNED OUT TO BE A FAILURE," THE GENERAL SAID. "HE WOULD NOT CRUMPLE. HE STAYED FIRM."

THE GENERAL ADDED DURING THE TRIAL ABEL SHOWED "INTEGRITY, PROFOUND LOVE OF COUNTRY, FAITHFULNESS TO DUTY, MORAL PURITY, COURAGE AND STAUNCHNESS."

"NOT FOR A SINGLE MOMENT DID HE LOSE HIS NERVE AND COMPOSURE WHEN THE SENTENCE WAS READ," HE SAID.

"IN JAIL HE BEHAVED WITH MODESTY AND DIGNITY. HE WAS SIMPLE IN ATTITUDE TOWARDS HIS FELLOW PRISONERS AND EVERYBODY RESPECTED HIM."

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